



## **GUIDELINES FOR SELLING EGGS AT FARMERS MARKETS/ROADSIDE STANDS**

1. All producer/packers of shell eggs must register with the Maryland Department of Agriculture annually. As part of the registration, producers must provide documentation that their chickens originated from a National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) tested hatchery. Producers may hatch their own chicks from hens that originated from a NPIP tested hatchery.
2. Cartons of eggs are required to be labeled with a grade, a size, a safe handling statement, the packer or distributor name and address, lot number (this number should be a method of identifying the flock - if you only have one flock "Lot 1" would be acceptable), registration number of the packer, quantity or net weight of eggs, and the identity of the product as eggs. Specific lettering heights and wording for labeling requirements can be obtained from the Egg Inspection Section, Maryland Department of Agriculture. Many office supply stores can make an inexpensive stamp with this information.
3. Reuse of cartons is strongly discouraged as it can result in contamination of the eggs. The use of dirty cartons is prohibited. Clean cartons that are reused must have only the correct information legible. All other markings must be obliterated.
4. All eggs must meet the standards for the grade and size for which they are labeled. Grade AA and Grade A are the only two consumer grades permitted to be sold in Maryland. The sale of cracked and dirty eggs (producers should contact MDA for information on proper washing to prevent contamination) is restricted by law.
5. Eggs must be held at 45°F or below ambient temperature. The use of ice to achieve this is prohibited. Freezer packs or mechanical refrigeration may be used unless specifically prohibited by the local health department. Eggs should never be held under conditions that cause them to sweat or be in direct contact with water as they may become contaminated. Display eggs that are not held at 45°F or below must be clearly labeled as "Display Only - Not for Consumption."
6. Producer/Packers registered with the Maryland Department of Agriculture are no longer required to obtain a license from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to sell their own eggs.

### **Contact:**

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